

IN THE CLAIMS:

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1. (previously presented): An apparatus for accessing and displaying multimedia content, comprising:

(a) database means for storing multimedia content records and associated references to media files for a multimedia presentation; and

(b) software engine means, executable on a computer, for seamlessly accessing a content record in said database means and locating and displaying associated media elements referred to in that content record.

2. (previously presented): An apparatus for accessing and displaying multimedia content, comprising:

a database containing multimedia content records and references to media files for a multimedia presentation; and

a software engine, executable on a computer, said software engine seamlessly accessing a content record in said database and locating and displaying media elements referred to in that content record.

3. (previously presented): An apparatus for accessing and displaying multimedia content, comprising:

a programmable data processor;

a database containing multimedia content records and references to media files for a multimedia presentation; and

programming associated with said programmable data processor for carrying out the operations of seamlessly accessing a content record in said database means and locating and displaying media elements referred to in that content record.

4. (previously presented): A computer program for accessing and displaying multimedia content, comprising a set of instructions stored on a media accessible by a computer and executable on said computer, wherein said computer program performs the steps of seamlessly accessing a content record in a database and locating and displaying media elements referred to in that content record.

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5. (previously presented): A multimedia delivery apparatus, comprising:

- (a) a database containing multimedia content records and references to media files for a multimedia presentation, and
- (b) a software delivery engine associated with said database and executable on a computer for seamlessly accessing a content record in said database means and locating and displaying, as one seamless multimedia application, media elements referred to in that content record, whether said media elements are stored on a local storage device or stored remotely on an Internet server.

6. (previously presented): A method for displaying multimedia content, comprising the steps of:

- storing in a database, multimedia content records and references to media files for a multimedia presentation; and
- seamlessly accessing, using a software engine executable on a computer, a content record in said database and locating and displaying media elements referred to in that content record.

7. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 1:

- wherein at least one of said multimedia content records includes at least one custom tag;
- wherein said software engine is configured to read said custom tag;
- wherein said custom tag instructs said engine to fetch a corresponding multimedia content record from said database;
- wherein said software engine reads said multimedia content record; and
- wherein said at least said portion of said content page is passed to an interface program for display.

8. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 7:

- wherein said software engine generates a temporary local copy of at least a portion of a content page from that multimedia content record for display; and

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wherein said displayed content page contains at least one custom tag for further navigation.

9. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 2:  
wherein at least one of said multimedia content records includes at least one custom tag;  
wherein said software engine is configured to read said custom tag;  
wherein said custom tag instructs said engine to fetch a corresponding multimedia content record from said database;  
wherein said software engine reads said multimedia content record; and  
wherein at least said portion of said content page is passed to an interface program for display.

10. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 9:  
wherein said software engine generates a temporary local copy of at least a portion of a content page from that multimedia content record for display; and  
wherein said displayed content page contains at least one custom tag for further navigation.

11. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 3:  
wherein at least one of said multimedia content records includes at least one custom tag;  
wherein said software engine is configured to read said custom tag;  
wherein said custom tag instructs said engine to fetch a corresponding multimedia content record from said database;  
wherein said software engine reads said multimedia content record; and  
wherein said at least said portion of said content page is passed to an interface program for display.

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12. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 11:  
wherein said software engine generates a temporary local copy of at least a portion of a content page from that multimedia content record for display; and  
wherein said displayed content page contains at least one custom tag for further navigation.

13. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 4:  
wherein at least one of said multimedia content records includes at least one custom tag;  
wherein said software engine is configured to read said custom tag;  
wherein said custom tag instructs said engine to fetch a corresponding multimedia content record from said database;  
wherein said software engine reads said multimedia content record; and  
wherein said at least said portion of said content page is passed to an interface program for display.

14. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 13:  
wherein said software engine generates a temporary local copy of at least a portion of a content page from that multimedia content record for display; and  
wherein said displayed content page contains at least one custom tag for further navigation.

15. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 5:  
wherein at least one of said multimedia content records includes at least one custom tag;  
wherein said software engine is configured to read said custom tag;  
wherein said custom tag instructs said engine to fetch a corresponding multimedia content record from said database;  
wherein said software engine reads said multimedia content record; and  
wherein said at least said portion of said content page is passed to an interface program for display.

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16. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 15:  
wherein said software engine generates a temporary local copy of at least a portion of a content page from that multimedia content record for display; and  
wherein said displayed content page contains at least one custom tag for further navigation.

17. (previously presented): A method as recited in claim 6:  
wherein at least one of said multimedia content records includes at least one custom tag;  
wherein said software engine is configured to read said custom tag;  
wherein said custom tag instructs said engine to fetch a corresponding multimedia content record from said database;  
wherein said software engine reads said multimedia content record; and  
wherein said at least said portion of said content page is passed to an interface program for display.

18. (previously presented): A method as recited in claim 17:  
wherein said software engine generates a temporary local copy of at least a portion of a content page from that multimedia content record for display; and  
wherein said displayed content page contains at least one custom tag for further navigation.

19. (previously presented): An apparatus for accessing and displaying multimedia content, comprising:  
a database containing multimedia content records and references to media files for a multimedia presentation; and  
a software engine, executable on a computer, said software engine seamlessly accessing a content record in said database and locating and displaying media elements referred to in that content record;  
wherein at least one of said multimedia content records includes at least one custom tag;

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wherein said software engine is configured to read said custom tag;  
wherein said custom tag instructs said engine to fetch a corresponding multimedia content record from said database;  
wherein said software engine reads said multimedia content record; and  
wherein said software engine generates a temporary local copy of at least a portion of a content page from that multimedia content record for display;  
wherein said at least said portion of said content page is passed to an interface program for display; and  
wherein said displayed content page contains at least one custom tag for further navigation.

20. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein said seamless accessing of content records in said database does not rely on the execution of individual components of programs which operate independently to display the various media content while not providing for any integration of the applications.

21. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 2, wherein said seamless accessing of content records in said database does not rely on the execution of individual components of programs which operate independently to display the various media content while not providing for any integration of the applications.

22. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 3, wherein said seamless accessing of content records in said database does not rely on the execution of individual components of programs which operate independently to display the various media content while not providing for any integration of the applications.

23. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 4, wherein said seamless accessing of content records in said database does not rely on the execution of individual components of programs which operate independently to display the various media content while not providing for any integration of the applications.

24. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 19, wherein said seamless accessing of content records in said database does not rely on the execution of individual components of programs which operate independently to display the various media content while not providing for any integration of the applications.

25. (currently amended): A multimedia delivery engine implemented as executable routines on a computer readable media for the seamless delivery of varied multimedia content to a user, comprising:

- (a) a reader routine configured to access HTML record content within a database;
- (b) a writing routine configured to write HTML text content of said HTML record content to a temporary cache file adapted for being read by an interface program for displaying said HTML text content in a display window;
- (c) a custom HTML tag processing routine configured to
  - (i) locate records in said database in response to a custom tag pointing to said database, copy record content to a temporary cache file, and display HTML content of said temporary cache file inclusive of graphics and hyperlinks contained therein,
  - (ii) locate and seamlessly display images located within local storage devices within an illustration window in response to a custom tag directed at local storage resources,
  - (iii) load and run media components according to a custom tag from links or links within database records that may be located in a local storage media or over a network connection, and
  - (iv) load web server-based content according to an additional custom tag;
- (d) wherein varied multimedia content from local and remote storage and content of additional database records may be accessed and displayed as one seamless multimedia application.

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26. (previously presented): A multimedia delivery engine as recited in claim 25, wherein said varied multimedia content comprises both high-bandwidth media for storage across local devices and current and time-sensitive content for storage remotely on an Internet server.

27. (previously presented): A multimedia delivery engine as recited in claim 26, wherein said high-bandwidth media comprises content retrieved from at least one mass storage device.

28. (previously presented): A multimedia delivery engine as recited in claim 25, wherein said multimedia delivery engine does not rely on the execution of individual components of programs which operate independently to display the various media content while not providing for any integration of the applications.

29. (previously presented): A method of delivering varied multimedia from a network enabled computer system in response to the contents of a database, comprising:

- (a) accessing HTML record content within a database;
- (b) writing HTML text content of said HTML record content to a temporary cache file adapted for being read by an interface program for displaying said HTML text content in a display window;
- (c) locating records in said database in response to a custom tag pointing to said database, copying record content to a temporary cache file, and displaying HTML content of said temporary cache file inclusive of graphics and hyperlinks contained therein;
- (d) locating and displaying images located within local storage devices within an illustration window in response to a custom tag directed at local storage resources,
- (e) loading and running media components according to a custom tag from links or links within database records that may be located in a local storage media or over a network connection; and
- (f) loading web server-based content according to an additional custom tag;



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(g) wherein varied multimedia content from local and remote storage and content of additional database records may be accessed and displayed as one seamless multimedia application.

30. (previously presented): A method as recited in claim 29, wherein said varied multimedia content comprises both high-bandwidth media for storage across local devices and current and time-sensitive content for storage remotely on an Internet server.

31. (previously presented): A method as recited in claim 29, wherein said high-bandwidth media comprises content retrieved from at least one mass storage device.

32. (previously presented): A method as recited in claim 29, wherein said method does not rely on the execution of individual components of programs which operate independently to display the various media content while not providing for any integration of the applications.

33. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 3, wherein said programming associated within said programmable data processor comprises a multimedia engine configured to locate and display all of the media elements referred to within a given content page record of said database file.

34. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 33, wherein said multimedia engine is configured to display media elements within one or more selected windows within said multimedia presentation.

35. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 34, wherein said multimedia engine is configured to display images within a main normal width display window or an expanded width window.

36. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 35, wherein said multimedia engine is configured to display images that are too large to comfortably fit either in said main normal width display window, or in said main display expanded width window, and can be stored in a database and displayed in a separate illustration window.

37. (previously presented): An apparatus for providing multimedia tutorials, comprising:

a database containing multimedia content records and references to media files for a multimedia presentation;

a software engine, executable on a computer, said software engine seamlessly accessing a content record in said database and locating and displaying media elements referred to in that content record;

wherein said software engine does not rely on the execution of individual components or programs which operate independently to display the various media content; and

a user interface upon which content is displayed by said software engine; a toolbar displayed by said software engine having buttons representing the media elements available within said content record.

38. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 37, wherein said software engine includes a reader portion that locates and displays all of the media elements referred to in that record of said database.

39. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 37, wherein said media content comprises video, audio, animation, or images.

40. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 37, wherein said toolbar provides controls for video media elements, audio media elements, and demonstration media elements.

41. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 40, wherein said toolbar comprises sequence control buttons for selecting tutorial positioning within said content records.

42. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 41, wherein said toolbar comprises a map control button for selecting a map window which displays the current position of the tutorial in the database index as a highlight within said map window, and is configured for allowing the user to select a topic within said map window which the database index is to be adjusted.

43. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 42, wherein said map window displays tutorial content in a hierarchical form and which is configured for being expanded or collapsed to provide a selected level of detail about the content.

44. (previously presented): An apparatus as recited in claim 37, further comprising a demonstration window displayed by said software engine that may be opened for demonstrating a process being described in said tutorial.

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